

1 MAY 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Operations
FROM: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Approval of Recommendations of Inspector
General's Report on the Office of Medical
Services (OMS)

1. I have approved recommendations B1-B4, C1-C5, D1, E1 and F1-18 of the Inspector General's April 1981 report on the Office of Medical Services (OMS). Recommendations B3, B4, D1 and F11 require action by you. Tab C (Field Reports) and Recommendation D1 were forwarded to you earlier. I have attached another extract from the inspection report for your information.

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appropriate components review procedures for briefing personnel prior to overseas assignment to ensure that they are provided with up-to-date information on the difficulties, as well as the benefits of serving at their posts of assignment; where feasible, Headquarters country branches or desks should arrange post briefings for spouses of employees heading overseas.

Please take on the responsibility for this "telling it like it is" effort coordinating as necessary with other components. We can, and should, do more to prepare employees to handle the stressful aspects of life overseas. I have not sent separate memoranda to each component and will rely on you to complete action on this recommendation. I would appreciate a report on your progress not later than 20 July 1981.

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This is a dual effort to promote awareness of medical support capabilities. Both you and the D/MS should work toward a common goal of better use of CMS support [redacted] I have asked the D/MS to provide a progress report not later than 20 July 1981.

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/s/ B. R. Inman

B. R. INMAN
Admiral, US Navy

Attachment

OIG [redacted]

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OMS INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT EXTRACT

"Telling It Like It Is"

In general, we can do more to prepare employees to handle the stressful aspects of life overseas. First of all, we must be frank with them about the situation they are likely to face abroad. This is particularly true of personnel departing on their first overseas tours. We heard numerous complaints to the effect that many adjustment difficulties in the field could have been avoided if Headquarters had made an effort to "tell it like it is." For example, clericals assigned to Asian cities such as [redacted] believed they could have coped better with such stress factors as the high cost of living, the lack of recreational facilities, and the cultural shock that comes with daily exposure to teeming crowds of alien people, chattering loudly in an incomprehensible language, if they had been prepared for these drawbacks. (See also Field Visit Reports [redacted]) Too often, however, they had been told that they were being assigned to the "Pearl of the Orient," and treated to their Headquarters branch chief's romanticized recollections of tours in the area during a happier era a decade or two ago.

Wives had similar complaints, though in their case it was more a matter of not being briefed at all, rather than of being supplied with misinformation. The extent to which this represents lack of communication between marriage partners or a failing on the part of Headquarters is hard to tell. But a number of spouses said they would like to have had the opportunity to speak to individuals at Headquarters with recent experience in their anticipated post of assignment.

The prevailing feeling is that, if available, post reports tend to paint too glowing a picture in order to entice people to come, while differential reports emphasize and sometimes exaggerate negative aspects in order to get the maximum financial benefit. Chiefs of Station should encourage and support the revision of post reports to ensure a more realistic picture. RMOs could also make a valuable contribution in this area because of their ability to evaluate general health conditions and should be encouraged to do so. The RMO in [redacted] wrote a study on local conditions and submitted it with a recent quarterly report. We found the study worthwhile.

OPPPM is establishing a family liaison unit at Ames Building to improve the briefing of dependents going overseas. We welcome this development, but we do not think it absolves Headquarters country branches and desks from making a better effort to ensure

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that families assigned to their areas are better informed. The new two-person unit at Ames will be hard pressed to have up-to-date, firsthand information on conditions at all posts abroad. OMS should be able to provide information and advice both to this unit and the OC family liaison unit on medical conditions abroad.

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